The Canadian experience with multiculturalism and employment equity: Lessons for Europe

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The Canadian experience with multiculturalism and employment equity: lessons for Europe

Hermann Kurthen

Abstract *Canada has been at the forefront of states that have embraced official policies which not only respect but encourage pluralism and equality policies within public institutions and the surrounding society. This article examines some of the pros and cons of Canada's legislated and state-supported multiculturalism and equal employment opportunity policy. Whereas the latter intends to address prejudice, discrimination, and inequality in the workplace, multiculturalism supports the expression and retention of voluntary collective identification reflecting a pragmatic response to practical problems for reasons of national identity, political unity, economic advantage, demographic need, and domestic peace as well as for international status and prestige. After providing an overview of major milestones and the rationale of the Canadian brand of multiculturalism and equity policy, this article explores how these concepts have been legitimised by proponents and criticised by adversaries as an ideology, institutionalised policy, and ethno-political movement. Finally, it will be asked what European nation-states can learn from the Canadian experience in responding to the challenges posed to their own societies.*

Immigration and the unexpected settlement of millions of people from non-European backgrounds in the post-World War II decades have brought into question the traditional assimilationist and monocultural self-understanding of many European countries. Currently about 18 million labour migrants, about 5–10 million refugees and asylum seekers, and an estimated 3–4 million undocumented migrants live among a total population of over 370 million in European Union (EU) member-states. From an ethnic,[1] demographic, linguistic, or religious point of view, the coexistence and fusion of multiple cultures[2] simply describes a reality, particularly in urbanised areas which have become truly cosmopolitan centres. In some cities and occupational segments immigrants and minorities represent between one-third and one-half of the residential population and job-holders. Stratification along ethnic lines and symptoms of ethno-cultural division are visible in areas such as employment, housing, and schooling.

However, the fact that a society is ethno-culturally or otherwise diverse does not necessarily imply that its members accept its status as a 'multicultural' society. The term multiculturalism (MC), as used in this context, involves consensus about what constitutes national identity, commonly shared societal values, minority rights,[3] and constitutional principles resulting in a policy

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commitment and practice supported by legislation and sponsorship of programmes. In opposition to the principles of full assimilation or segregation MC promotes the acceptance and accommodation of immigrants and minorities through pluralist[4] participation, representation, and access to resources and opportunities. Or, as Fleras defines it more abstractly, MC is 'a doctrine and corresponding set of practices that provide an official framework for transforming racial and ethnic diversity into an integral and legitimate component of the social order' (Fleras 1993: 385).

Resistance to accommodating diversity in Europe and continuing resentment, discrimination, and violence against minorities and immigrants indicates that in contrast to countries like Canada multiculturalism has not been recognised as a remedy for combating ethnocentrism and racism and for managing differences between majority and minority groups. Rather, MC continues to be used as a polarising buzzword in political discussions.[5]

With varying meanings according to national history, demographic composition, and political cultures, the opaque use of the term 'multiculturalism' has evoked both enthusiasm as well as anxiety and served almost all political and ideological purposes (Rex 1994; Schmitter Heisler 1992). Supporters perceive the concept and practice of multiculturalism as a solution to problems resulting from global migration as well as a countermeasure against the degree to which modern societies are becoming divided along ethnic lines. They claim that MC helps to reduce discrimination, disadvantage, and inequality, and is a way of reconciling diversity with societal unity. Opponents condemn multicultural concepts as a hoax which instrumentalises and exploits primordial beliefs, or see them as a device to seed disunity and parochial ideologies. Some critics call MC pure symbolism, superficial and empty rhetoric, a policy geared at buying the ethnic vote with tax money, or a multi-million dollar business of ethnic entrepreneurs. For other adversaries, MC is a tool of ideological inculcation drawing attention away from more important issues of class, power, and cultural colonisation of minorities. MC has also been accused of being a guilt-ridden idealist ideology that would end as an utopian nightmare.

Since Canada has been at the forefront of states who embraced MC through policies that respect and encourage diversity within society and public institutions, the questions arises of what lessons European nation-states can learn from the Canadian experience? In the following, an overview of major milestones and the rationale of the Canadian brand of multiculturalism and equity policy precedes an exploration of how these concepts have been legitimised, criticised and practised, and to what extent they could provide answers to challenges Europe is facing.

A brief history of Canadian multiculturalism policy

The Canadian experience with MC illustrates the potential risks as well as the opportunities of a federally organised democracy built on individualism, equality, and universalist liberties that tries to accommodate collective and particularistic minority and immigrant interests. As one of the first and foremost countries to question the traditional assimilationist organisation of nation-states, Canada has officially adopted a policy of MC, employment equity, non-discrimination, and bilingualism in its constitution and law.[6] Moreover, Canada has established funds and administrative bodies at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels.

The objective of Canada's policy is the recognition and promotion of voluntarily chosen collective identities of immigrants and minorities, and the lending of material support to the recognition of diversity *within* one national unit. Legal and political institutionalisation and broad elite support is an important feature that distinguishes Canadian (and Australian) from American multiculturalism, which focuses on social movements and an intellectual discourse, and emphasises educational curricula. Canadian MC encourages the peaceful redistribution of resources, power, status, and normative symbols among immigrants and minorities and the mainstream majority, leaving a mark on social stratification, political representation, cultural expression, and the collective sense of national membership (McLellan and Richmond 1994: 673). The policy intends to respond to the country's diversity. Canada has a population of almost 29 million people, of whom approximately one-fifth are foreign-born. About 32 per cent of all Canadians have non-French, non-Anglo, or non-aboriginal origins, of which about 11 per cent are so-called 'visible' (racial) minorities. Mainly through immigration the latter group is expected to increase to 12–18 per cent in the year 2001.[7] After the USA and Australia, Canada is the third largest self-declared immigration country with an annual net immigration of between 100,000 and 200,000 persons.

Between its colonisation (1534) and its confederation (1867), Canada's demographic and ethnic composition, ideologies, and policies for dealing with these changes greatly altered. The country's modern history of diversity can be traced back to the French and the British colonisation movements. After militarily defeating the French in the mid-eighteenth century, the British allowed the latter to retain their own language, religion, symbols, and even control of their own local affairs, provided they accepted Anglo-domination. Later loyalists from south of the border, black refugees from the USA, Irish Protestants and Catholics, Germans, Mennonites, Ukrainians, Jews, and others were accepted as immigrants. Only persons from Asia were blatantly excluded. Increased immigration to Canada from all parts of Europe at the end of the nineteenth century and before World War I created a new demographic picture and a 'third force'. Therefore the ideological (and somewhat simplistic) term 'Canadian ethnic mosaic' was coined in the 1920s. But beyond the related rhetoric of the Canadian 'flower garden', 'salad bowl' and 'stew', little support was given to groups wanting to maintain their heritage or language and resist the pressures of Anglo-Canadian assimilation. This approach changed after 1945, when Canada admitted another wave of approximately 6 million immigrants. In 1962 the country slowly began to disassociate itself from earlier immigrant admittance policies inspired by either 'Anglo-conformity', 'white only', or 'white if possible' philosophies (Hawkins 1988: 12). The country also repudiated a Canadian version of the American 'melting pot' ideology as merely a modernised version of nationalism.[8] Originally Canada intended to promote what has been called *laissez-faire* multiculturalism, i.e. a policy that supported more tolerance for ethnic groups with distinguished cultural features (Moghaddam 1993: 736). But multiculturalism was extended when the government started to protect expression and retention of minority heritage and identity institutionally.

With heightened concern about human rights, the resurgence of ethnic awareness, rising nationalism in Quebec, the threat of American cultural 'annexation', and increased immigration from non-European countries in the 1960s, the earlier Canadian 'mosaic' rhetoric took on serious multicultural policy implications and

the Anglo-Canadian majority was pressured to grant concessions to Franco-phones and ethnic minorities (Fleras 1993: 388). Originally the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963) had the task of developing the Canadian confederation on the basis of an equal linguistic and cultural partner-ship between the two founding 'races' of Anglo- and Francophones. Yet, a growing number of ethnic and 'visible' minority and immigrant groups and the aboriginal people ('first nations', i.e. native Indians, Metis and Inuit) demanded equal treatment and autonomy as well (Kallen 1982: 57ff). Responding to the 1971 Royal Commission Report on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, the Canadian federal government under Prime Minister Trudeau began to promote actively a policy of diversity based on constitutional equality and retention of ethno-cul-tural heritage among all Canadians as well as ensuring increased tolerance towards different ways of living. With a subtle shift in terminology, bicultural-ism gave way to multiculturalism, although bilingualism, confirmed in the Official Languages Act in 1969, continued to represent the original intentions of accommodating only the French language rights in a dominant Anglophone Canada.

De facto recognition of diversity and pluralism was reached with the federal government's policy statement on multiculturalism in the *House of Commons Debates* on 8 October 1971. It set forth the following four objectives: (a) more tolerance and respect for, and assistance to, minority groups in terms of the retention of their cultural heritage and identity; (b) the preservation of human rights and creation of awareness about unfair treatment, inequality, discrimi-nation and racism; (c) the strengthening of citizen participation and assistance, particularly that of minorities and immigrants, in order to guarantee their full integration into Canadian society; and (d) the establishment of intercultural exchange, assistance in the learning of at least one official language, and education through the creation of awareness of diversity and its synergetic potential.

The official goal of this policy was to develop a new Canadian identity by supporting national unity, a sense of shared values, and cultural harmony through the acceptance of diversity and bilingualism as national foundations. These intentions were expressed by the motto: 'one nation, two languages, many peoples and cultures'. Yet, because of the breadth of these statements, in the following years MC was practised in a variety of ways, sometimes reflecting contradictory philosophies or interpretations. Some programmes supported by the Secretary of State were directed at the expression and perpetuation of ethno-cultural identity (including, among other things, language, customs and heritage). Other activities were designed specifically to facilitate rapid inte-gration and the breakdown of ethnic distinctiveness. Some programmes were intended to bring people of diverse backgrounds together in MC centres, and some were just pragmatic, temporary expedients for dealing with the reception of immigrants and their children (Jaenen 1983: 15). The policy of that time also mixed the issues of *national* minorities (Quebec, aboriginals) with that of immi-grant groups. In fact, French Canadians opposed this form of MC because they thought it trivialised and reduced their claims of nationhood to the level of immigrant minorities. Others feared that MC policy treated immigrant groups as nations, thereby supporting the growth of institutionally complete communities alongside the French and the English (Kymlicka 1995: 17). MC as enacted at the

time was perceived as either too weak to accommodate the needs of minorities and immigrants or as a source of disunity and further segregation.

In other words, the precise configuration of Canadian MC and its promise of free development of particularist cultures and values became the subject of public controversy and debate (Berry *et al.* 1976: 4). Various alternatives of MC were discussed, including *incorporation* (meaning integration without assimi-lation in the sense that the integrity of the incorporated is to be maintained),[9] mutual adjustment (where the dominant group has to accommodate minorities in a negotiation process through an adjustment that is acceptable to both groups), interculturalism (which recognises and accepts to a certain degree an asymmetry between majority and minority, as in the case of Quebec), and transculturalism, a multiple, open-ended synergetic fusion of cultures replacing the old ethnic nationalism (Paquet 1994: 69f).

Institutional framework

As a result of domestic discussion, minority group lobbying, and support from the Canadian Liberal Party, Canada's MC policy was broadened from maintain-ing mainly minority cultures and languages to improving intergroup relations through antiracism, anti-discrimination, and equal opportunity policies in the late 1970s and 1980s. These changes were intended to persuade the Canadian public of the usefulness of the programme and give the policy more 'teeth'. Consequently additional legislation, policies, strategies, and institutional struc-tures were introduced, and the administrative superstructure was changed several times better to adapt to these new objectives.

Some of the concerns of critics were addressed through changes to the Immigration Act, the 1986 Employment Equity Act (see below), the 1982 Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, and the establishment of Human Rights Commissions. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms became law in 1985. Section 15 consists of (a) equality rights: section (1) states that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and the equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental and physical disability. This does not preclude any law, programme or activity that has as its object the amelioration of condition of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability; (b) language rights (section 16): 'English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada'; and (c) multicultural rights (section 27): 'This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhance-ment of the multicultural heritage of Canadians'. Although this legislation enshrined as national policy a fundamental respect for individual autonomy, equality rights, and ethno-cultural differences, it was restricted in so far as its wording was ambivalent and no positive action was required.

This shortfall was addressed by the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, passed by unanimous consent on 21 July 1988. It is based on three principles: (1) MC is a central feature of Canadian citizenship; (2) every Canadian has the freedom to choose to enjoy, enhance, and share his or her heritage while working to achieve

the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural, and political life of Canada. It also ensures that all individuals receive equal treatment and equal protection under the law, while respecting and valuing their diversity; (3) the federal government has the responsibility to promote MC throughout its departments and agencies. The Act reaffirmed the right of individuals to identify with the cultural heritage of their choice and gave collective rights versus excessive individualism more legal authority and weight independent of partisan party politics and electoral dissatisfaction (Fleras 1993: 391). Conformity to a dominant group, i.e. cultural assimilation, adaptation of majority lifestyles or, English language, was no longer required. Each minority group now had a right to develop its own forms of lingual and cultural expression and its necessary institutions and symbols; for example, to set up state-funded voluntary language classes, to be represented in school curricula, and to receive equal respect for religious customs and holidays.

In 1972 the Canadian Prime Minister appointed a Multiculturalism Directorate within the Department of the Secretary of State. Following the 1988 Multiculturalism Act a Minister became responsible for policy implementation and monitoring. In addition, a secretariat within the Department of the Secretary of State was established in order to assist the Minister in implementing his mandate. Because of political changes, however, the Directorate was hampered. Nearly ten different federal ministers were responsible for issues related to MC during the 1980s. Since 1990 the Directorate has been administered by the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship.

Originally the Directorate was responsible for developing and administering federally funded programmes focusing on ethnic communities and the ethnic press according to the priorities set forth in 1971. The Canadian Ethnic Studies Association and its publications were supported, activities in the performing and visual arts were sponsored, and grants were given for a vast array of other projects and research (Burnet 1987: 69). In the 1980s and 1990s the focus shifted from symbolic folklorist and heritage retention activities, such as food fairs, festivals, carnivals, and English as a Second Language (ESL)/French as a Second Language (FSL) language training to immigrant incorporation (settlement services, counselling centres, official-language instruction, cross-cultural training), legal protection (anti-discrimination in the workplace, housing, education, criminal, and justice system), representation (access to institutions), and equal participation (in federal and government institutions). Currently a central objective is to promote harmonious 'race' relations, to enhance cross-cultural understanding and antiracist education, to preserve heritage languages and cultures, and to foster cross-government commitment for all federal institutions (Fleras 1993: 390f).

Simultaneously with the establishment of new administrative structures, additional programmes and larger funds were set up. In 1973 two advisory bodies were founded: the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism[10] and the Canadian Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee (CESAC). Three national conferences were organised as well as regional and national meetings with recommendations for the government in 1973 and 1977. Public strategies, such as monitoring through Parliamentary Committees and Task Forces as well as Equality Rights reports were also developed. Federal agencies such as the National Film Board, the National Museums of Canada, the National Library, the Public Archives, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications

Commission, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and the Canada Council have also helped implement the multiculturalism policy (Burnet 1987: 69).

Whereas between 1971 and 1987 the government spent 200 million Canadian dollars, in the much shorter period between 1989 and 1994 about $190 million (1994: $25 million) were assigned for MC activities. But the programme has not been immune to budget cuts in recent years, and critics are quick to point out that funding remains insufficient given the ambitious programme and verbal commitments (Adam 1994: 21). In 1993, under political and economic pressure, Prime Minister Kim Campbell scrapped the MC department and, for the first time in 21 years, dropped the MC portfolio from Cabinet (Cardozo 1994b: 16). In the federal government, MC is now part of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta adopted provincial MC policies based on the federal version. Quebec developed a policy based on a more collective teleological (goal-oriented) definition that clashes with the individual procedural conception of rights-liberalism in Anglo-Canada. Quebec's restrictions were legitimised in the name of the collective goal of survival of the Francophone culture and language against subtle and open English predomination (Taylor 1992: 52f).[11] The Franco-Canadian interpretation requires restrictions on the behaviour of persons living in Quebec which is seen by many as violation of individual rights. The schooling provision of Law 101 forbids, for example, Francophones and immigrants to send their children to English-language schools, but allows Canadian Anglophones to do so. One Quebec provision outlaws unilingual English signs in Quebec, another requires that businesses with more than 50 employees be run in French.

Equity policy as additional component

A philosophical and ideological element of Canada's policy to manage diversity is its egalitarianism, based on the formal Aristotelian principle that 'equality' in morals means that things that are alike should be treated alike, and that equality and justice are synonymous: to be just is to be equal (see Ontario Ministry of Citizenship 1989). Equality should comprise the right to equal treatment, representation, participation, and respect in all dimensions of life because, as for example Rex has pointed out, without equality of individuals and groups in the public spheres (law, politics, markets, social welfare) equality in the *private* domain (religion, family affairs, education, and language use) will be reduced to affirmative folklore that does not remove assimilative pressures of the dominant group (Rex 1985). Therefore, this argument goes, employment equity policies have to go beyond defensive anti-discrimination policies and become more proactive to achieve equal opportunities in institutions such as schools, politics, and the law. Equality in the workplace is seen as important because employment opportunities largely determine a person's life chances, social position, and status.

Yet critics have pointed out that procedural equality does not magically overcome economic disadvantage, ethno-stratification, and discrimination, nor does it give a share of power in major economic and political institutions. Because formal equality is only concerned with the process, unequal outcomes may result. And the right to treatment as an equal is too vague to be effective as a voluntary or legally enforced norm. Thus, while equality of opportunity is

a precondition of equality of outcome, it is insufficient to attain the complete goal. On the other hand, because equality of results does not recognise different and unequally distributed individual characteristics, abilities, and needs within a group, it has been suggested that equal opportunities be amended with a policy that controls for equal success rates.[12] In particular employment equity should be implemented and legislated with targets, goals, timetables, and a review process to eliminate barriers based on ascriptive group characteristics. But to avoid allegations of 'reverse discrimination', policies should ensure that individual merit and achievement characteristics of designated group members are the basis for allocating social and economic benefits.

As in the case of MC, employment equity and equal pay policies in Canada are rooted in constitutional rights embedded in federal, provincial and local legislation. Whereas in the early years a formal interpretation of equality prevailed, in later stages some amendments have been made to strengthen equal outcomes by addressing 'systemic' obstacles to equal treatment, and by combining in the federal programme goals and timetables with monitoring instruments. Main pillars of the Canadian equity legislation are the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the 1986 Federal Government Employment Equity Act, the 1986 Federal Government Contractors Program, the 1988 Multiculturalism Act, and the 1988 Pay Equity Legislation.[13] The Employment Equity Act replaced inefficient voluntary 'good faith' efforts to increase the representation of target groups but is relatively vague and short, consisting of merely 14 paragraphs. The Act covers four designated groups – women (46 per cent of the Canadian labour force), so-called 'visible' minorities (9 per cent), disabled persons (2.6 per cent), and aboriginal peoples (1 per cent).

In contrast to widespread assumptions, the legislation mandates no quotas or preferential hiring, although it does require employers to report data and attempt 'reasonable accommodation' of equal representation, mostly restricted to hiring, training, and promotion. The concrete form of compliance is left to the discretion of the organisations. Finally, the Act affects only federally regulated companies, namely banks, transportation companies, broadcasters, telephone companies, and so-called crown corporations with more than 100 employers. Non-regulated companies, which comprise the bulk of private companies, are not covered by the Act. They still rely on the 'voluntary approach',[14] which remains not very effective (Kurthen 1993, and forthcoming). To make the legislation more comprehensive, provincial and municipal equity laws demanding contract compliance and pay equity (see above) were added in the late 1980s and early 1990s, although their scope and objectives vary. In the mid-1990s, with a less favourable political and economic climate, the provincial programmes came under attack. For example, an Ontario programme established in 1994 that asked workers to self-report their status in order to establish firm-by-firm employment goals has been frozen by the new Conservative provincial government under Harris (*Migration News*, December 1995). Similar reversals of policies have occurred in Alberta. Only Bill C-64, intended to clarify and strengthen the federal Employment Equity Act of 1986, was approved on 15 December 1995.

Critics accuse the programme of targeting groups, such as women, who are not all members of an underclass historically denied their rights. Also the fact that immigrants[15] are supposedly entitled to special treatment is seen as an unjust advantage over, for example, native white and male high-school graduates and members of the native-born underclass. It is also alleged that equity measures stigmatise newcomers as people in need of special advantages. To date, studies have not found much evidence of 'reverse' discrimination, although the broad generalisation intrinsic to categories like 'visible' minorities indeed may mask class, gender, and other differences among target groups. Equity measures would probably profit if the individual social and economic background were taken more seriously into account, if foreign credentials and certificates of immigrants were fully accepted (Adam 1994: 26f), and if disadvantaged groups would receive more assistance in job-finding, language, and other training programmes.[16] Another line of criticism charges the current equity legislation as inefficient because statistical reports show only minuscule or slow gains of visible minorities in the overall workforce representation, in earnings, and in mobility.[17] Recent studies also indicate comparatively little support for employment equity on the part of individual employers (Kurthen, forthcoming), among important employers' associations and some unions.[18] To explain why Canadian equity legislation is still far from its objective, supporters point at several reasons: insufficient resources, lack of stringent compliance at the corporate level, imperfections of labour markets, and the erosion of the political will to legislate proactive measures in the wake of economic restructuring, stagnant high unemployment, and continuous allegations of 'reverse' discrimination. Proponents further argue that a purely statistical view hides qualitative changes in the attitudes of employees and employers as well as different policy outcomes for different target groups and occupational segments. Polls indicate that the vision of equality and fairness, the publicity of the programme, and its widely disseminated annual reports have created awareness about discrimination and stereotyping among businesses, unions, and minorities themselves.[19] A broad coalition of women, minorities, and the disabled accept in principle the usefulness of the programme and push for the continuing implementation of equity measures. So far only the right-wing populist Reform party in British Columbia has left the party consensus and openly attacked equity policies, state-funded MC, and Canada's immigration policy.

Controversial assessment of Canada's multiculturalism and equity policies

The effectiveness of Canada's official policy can be assessed by examining empirical indicators that signal success or failure. Public legitimacy of multiculturalist and equity ideology can be measured, for example, by the intensity of the debate and opinion surveys. In fact, the Canadian public has been involved throughout the implementation of MC and equity programmes. But since the late 1980s the discussion has become more controversial, and supporters of MC and equity policies have come under siege for several reasons. For some left-oriented and radical critics the slow change effected by equity policies that neither swept away all discriminatory barriers nor significantly enhanced the socio-economic status of many target groups with immediate effect as expected, was interpreted as a sign of failure. Right-wing Anglo- and Francophones rejected MC policies for self-serving ethnocentric reasons from the beginning (Wilson 1993). They used the anti-immigrant backlash of the 1990s to intensify their campaign (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 1992). In addition, several obscure incidents,[20] Quebecois separatism, continuing 'apartheid' of Aboriginals, and

fiscal constraints gave conservative critics new strength. The following presents, in a condensed form, the standard opposing or supporting arguments.[21] This will shed light on practical problems, benefits as well as disadvantages, of the Canadian experience, including domestic controversies that may arise as a result of institutionalising multiculturalism and employment equity.

Liberal universalists criticise Canadian MC as being incompatible with liberal individualism. Special treatment of particular ethnic collectives seems to contradict any commitment to individual liberties and equality (Kallen 1982). MC is denounced as a false, illusory, and outdated ideology seeding artificial particularism, disunity ('Balkanisation'), and old-fashioned ethno-racial resentment.[22] According to this perspective, the goal of retaining one's cultural identity or heritage blocks immigrant integration, creates artificial barriers between groups, discourages those who want to integrate into mainstream culture, and creates false hopes for survival of customs and language among exotic minorities, all at the taxpayers' expense (Berry and Laponce 1994: 9; Paquet 1994: 68f). Others maintain that the policy binds immigrants within voluntary minority ghettos where they are vulnerable to exploitation by powerful ethnic groups and entrepreneurs (Bissoondath 1994). The credo of these voices is that the liberal state should not actively provide the tools to preserve minority or 'peripheral' nationalism (Smith 1991: 156) that may end in a 'mosaic madness' (Bibby 1990), which keeps particularist groups and their 'constructed' identities artificially alive at the cost of an eroding sense of community.

A similar, but more pronounced, criticism is made by conservatives, who denounce MC as a threat to Anglo-Saxon and Judeo-Christian Western culture, values, and established order. They call it a biased, costly, and divisive policy of imported and institutionalised tribalism and hierarchic ethnic order that only stirs up prejudice and conflict. MC, they argue, has no scientific basis and ignores ethno-cultural differences and traits. It also imposes in an unbalanced way minority customs, opinions, and interests on the majority. Conservatives also fear that MC prevents the establishment or stabilisation of identity and values of the Anglo-Canadian majority (Roy 1995). In fact, some polls indicate that public scepticism of the consequences of immigration and MC for national unity and the preservation of 'Canadian' traditions, symbols, and heritage runs deep (Berry and Laponce 1994: 13; Roy 1995: 206f).[23] Additionally, the specific methods, costs of implementation, and ability of the federal government to manage diversity and immigration are the target of conservative criticism. Some point at continuous racism and xenophobia as an indication of MC's failure (Bisoondath 1994; Fleras 1993: 393). Liberal immigration and refugee policies, multiculturalism and equity policy, they say, creates what it intends to avoid: fear and resentment about jobs, wages, housing, education, welfare, and social security benefits, particularly among the disadvantaged native-born. Supporters of MC counter that many of these liberal and conservative allegations are unduly alarmist, not least because they overstate state policy impacts, ignore the governments limitations of institutional resources, and discount intervening interests and forces that water down policy initiatives and high-minded policy intentions. Those who want to restrict immigration are countered with the argument that there is strikingly little evidence that immigration poses any sort of threat to unity or stability (Kymlicka 1995: 178).

The conflict or neo-Marxist perspective opposes MC in Canada as an evasive and pacifying ideology preventing the development of class consciousness. They see it as a means of obscuring deeper conflicts, such as racism, class struggles, and ethno-stratification. According to this view, MC is a regressive battle against a global capitalist and hollow consumerist culture that increasingly submerges differences (Jacoby 1994: 122). Some minority critics condemn the abuse and manipulation of MC for political purposes or decry its 'emptiness', which creates neither strong ethnic rights nor obligations. They claim MC raises only false hopes of integration, or rewards marginalised groups for remaining peripheral by labelling them 'minority' cultures (Paquet 1994: 67, citing Meghji 1990).

Another line of criticism comes from radical pluralists and radical egalitarians who denounce the inadequate and half-hearted form of the current incarnation of MC, or who allege a squandering of resources on areas of only symbolic or marginal need. For radical pluralists, Canadian MC is a policy of appeasement to preserve an 'ethnic zoo' of museum cultures. Only folklorist, non-threatening 'middle-class' associations and groups receive state funding, they claim (Adam 1994: 20). Radical egalitarians criticise the lack of a consistent policy to enforce structural equality. From their viewpoint MC is more a policy of procedures than essential content and equal outcomes. Some suggest that equal opportunities be amended with a policy that sets quotas, including enforceable timetables, goals, sanctions, and a review process (Ontario Ministry of Citizenship 1989). Collective rights critics focus mainly on minority language issues. They point out that French and English bilingualism is an insufficient policy, arguing that without multilingualism MC is merely an empty shell. They demand recognition and protection of collective rights of non-chartered groups, such as the right to understand and be understood by the state, the right to use one's language before the courts, the right to be educated in one's own mother tongue, and the right to maintenance of language and culture in public institutions, such as primary and secondary schools, community colleges, universities, and public broadcasting.

Supporters of MC and equity policies in the Canadian government and a majority of the intellectual, economic, and political elite, still reject such criticism and praise instead the advantages of the – admittedly imperfect – performance of Canadian legislation and policies.[24] They defend existing policies with the argument that minorities and equity programmes are neither responsible for structural inequality (capitalist market forces are), nor for racism and disunity (prevailing ideologies and individuals are). Nor is the policy, they counter, simply a thinly veiled instrument of internal colonialism. Rather, MC and employment equity work to assist recently arrived immigrants and protect minorities from racism by asserting their rights. As an ideal, it recognises diverse cultures and the right to express differences rooted in different origins. Therefore it is only a means to recognise human uniqueness in a democratic universalist framework that presents no threat to national cohesion (Li 1995). From a pragmatic viewpoint, MC policies adequately reflect ongoing social and demographic changes in Canada, global (economic) interdependence, and cultural exchange, in short: modernisation. Liberal supporters defend the rejection of conformity to majority values and the right of identity retention with the argument that only intact cultures provide a basis for meaningful individual choices. From a more instrumentalist perspective, MC liberates creative and productive forces of minorities for the good of Canada as a national collective instead of letting them become destructive, i.e. resulting in divisive ethno-national or cultural conflicts and a possible break-up of the country. Rather, the

policy uses diversity as a positive economic resource and improves the inter-national status, prestige, and image of Canada.

An emancipatory faction argues that a number of important and publicly recognised court cases have increased public awareness about structural in-equality and discrimination because tolerance and anti-discrimination are now enforceable by law and are not just empty phrases. And minorities and immi-grants have fewer problems becoming successful in Canada without being forced to assimilate to Anglo- or Franco-Canadian values: communities are brought into the mainstream through positive recognition of their collective heritage and identities; minority needs in education, worship, etc are actively accommodated; and pluralism has been established in government institutions.

From a more state-centred ideological nation-building view, MC has helped to unify Canada on the basis of a distinct 'nationalism'. By defining Canada as a polyethnic and multinational commonwealth built on ideals like fairness, equal-ity, tolerance, and mutual understanding, a positive definition of the Canadian nation-state has been advanced and distanced the country from neighbouring USA. In other words: MC has become an identity substitute or ideological glue for the lack of otherwise unifying ethnic, linguistic, historical, geographic, cultural, and other common or imagined collective bonds (Laczko 1994: 38). In the eyes of many supporters, this strategy of nation-building averted ethnic and 'racial' violence as experienced in the USA and also eased Canada's transition from a hegemonic nation-state under the domination of Anglo-Celtics to a plural multinational and multi-ethnic confederation (Wilson 1993: 652ff).

Although some critics maintain the latter strategy failed because it was not able to lessen the demand for self-determination by national minorities (Quebec, aboriginals) but rather served particularist group interests (Harney 1988), propo-nents reject such pessimism. The existence of legislation, constitutional texts, curricula, programmes, enforcement agencies, and monitoring reports, they say, created a framework in which the practical as well as symbolic needs of both minorities and majorities can be discussed, and practised in a democratic way. They maintain against the critics' 'onslaught of contradictory, unfounded, and self-serving assertions' (Fleras and Elliott 1992: 5) that Canada had no better alternative to come to terms with growing poly-ethnicity. Progressive laws and policies recognising immigration and pluralism have fostered the ideals of procedural justice, human equality, and respect among majority and minority groups (Adam 1994: 9). MC and equity policies, they argue, have helped to define a departure from majoritarian conformism or exclusive ethnocentrism towards the development of postnational identities and a new symbiotic atmos-phere of inter-ethnic and pluri-cultural reconciliation and respect in attitudes and everyday behaviour. Polls measuring sympathy, social closeness, and the extent of everyday interaction between majority and immigrant minority groups in Canada confirm that acceptance, tolerance, and mutual understanding has indeed increased over time.[25] Proponents also point at other manifestations of improved majority-minority relations, such as the increasing number of mixed marriages; relatively high language retention rates; and the positive self-identification of minorities in polls and in the Canadian Census, corresponding to continuing strong identification with the Canadian polity. Other evidence cited is the low degree of hate crime and ethno-racial incidents in comparison with the neighbouring USA. Widespread public attendance of multicultural events and the use of related symbols and increasing participation of minorities

in public affairs, politics, and immigrant associations is brought forward by defenders of MC. Finally, the relatively low degree of ethno-racial segregation in housing and education; relatively moderate occupational, income, and earnings inequality (ethno-stratification); similarities in labour market participation rates and unionisation between minority and majority populations; and signs of improved social mobility of the second generation of immigrant minority children is used as an argument in favour of Canadian policies (see also Reitz and Breton 1994).

The following presents a summary of central problems that are at the heart of the Canadian experience with multiculturalism and equity policies as well as the debate about their benefits and disadvantages. They concern the following conceptual questions of accommodating diversity that may also be of import-ance for Europe (see also Castles 1994: 18).

First, how should one reconcile individual and collective rights? As Berry and Laponce point out, the juxtaposing of these rights contains a semantic confusion. 'Collective rights', they maintain, need to be distinguished as 'those given to certain categories of individuals and those given to collectivities' (1994: 13). Canadian employment equity legislation covers the first type of rights, because not only group membership but also an individual's qualification level and ability qualify for programme participation. However, in the past, Canadian law and court decisions have remained somewhat ambiguous in distinguishing, implementing, and enforcing these two different types of collective rights interpretations.[26] A related question is the protection of individual group mem-bers from undue intrusion by collective rights. It has been argued by some that the inclusion of human rights legislation as a cornerstone of Canadian MC has established standards for the defence of personal liberties against intolerant group demands. Additionally, universal treatment of individuals who volun-tarily join or identify with ethno-cultural groups is protected by public law. Such cover is important because group rights in some instances adversely affect public security, contravene the laws of the land, or interfere with the rights of individuals, as when they subordinate women, promote 'honour' instead of justice, or otherwise violate human rights (see Fleras 1993: 387).

Second, how can one allow the expression of particularist interests without infringing on universalist values and rights? This question raises the compli-cated issue of the limits of tolerance. From a liberal rights perspective, equal treatment and individual freedom apply both to the relationship *between* groups and *within* groups (see Kymlicka 1995: 194). In other words: universal individual liberties are superior to ascriptive and collective identities: respect and recogni-tion of universal rights supersede in any case particularistic ones. Ethno-cultural identities or traditions should not be forced onto individuals or other groups. This understanding contains a contradiction because it means imposing liberal norms on illiberal minorities. As a safeguard this should happen within a procedural framework that ensures fair and equal treatment of individual and collective group interests. MC in Canada has been defined in a similar fashion as promoting pluralism through embedding the voluntary expression of partic-ularist identities into a framework of constitutionally guaranteed universalist values. Such an universalist pluralism is in contrast to the concept of corporatist pluralism, i.e. group-based representation of individual interests where collec-tive rights can supersede individual ones. According to the liberal ideology, to elevate ethnic identity to a position equal in significance to, or above, a person's

universal identities is to weaken the foundations of liberalism and to open the door to intolerance (see Taylor 1992: 88, citing Rockefeller). Thus, maintenance of cultural traditions and voluntary ethnic identification is placed in a wider context and linked to democratic procedures and values. In practice this objective is far from fulfilled in Canada, not only because the Canadian brand of MC has so far failed to accommodate sufficiently historic grievances of aboriginals and the Francophones' ethnic nationalism but also because policies shifted and the legislators and politicians failed to give the policy from the beginning the precision it needed. In fact, if collective identities and territorial claims are as deeply entrenched as in Quebec, with calls for national 'self-determination', other models, such as the consociational power-sharing approach may be more feasible policy options than multiculturalism.

Third, how is it possible to reconcile the ontological contradictions between liberal-democratic standards of equality and the promise to recognise difference or particularism by granting minorities special group rights? The tension between these principles of equality and difference/diversity is embodied in the contradictory notion of 'separate/different but equal' ('equality denies differences') (Paquet 1994: 75). Certainly, membership in a civil society cannot entitle all members to the same living standards, social mobility, or life chances. Therefore it has been suggested that acknowledgement be made of individual and collective demands for separateness, social distance, differences, and hierarchies if they are voluntary, not blatantly discriminatory, not motivated by ethnocentrism/superiority claims, and not in denial of basic human and democratic rights. In the case of the Canadian employment equity legislation the tension has been bridged by recognising not just group membership but also the individual's qualifications and merits to decide whether a person should benefit from the programme. Another example for imperfectly but practically dealing with the philosophical antinomy of equality and difference is the question how to define by law obligations and rights of persons born on the territory of Canada from persons who are residing in the country as immigrants. The so-called denizen status gives choices of citizenship status acquisition and access to different entitlements (see Paquet 1994: 76). Once an immigrant has decided to become a naturalised citizen after a minimum of 3 years, such distinctions become obsolete. Needless to say, newcomers' access to social services, equity regulations, and welfare entitlements after such a short naturalisation period creates tensions between native-born lifetime taxpayers and immigrants. Critics maintain that 'indiscriminate' inclusion/equalisation invites abuse,[27] and does not necessarily create identification, cultural association, or a will for political or social participation (Paquet 1994: 74). Here an unresolved conflict exists between the need to incorporate immigrants as much and as soon as possible and the right of the native-born population to enjoy the fruits of their contribution to national or collective welfare funds and the obligation of newcomers to prove their willingness and ability to become full-fledged citizens in 'good faith'. A responsible and controlled immigration and naturalisation policy that entails a hierarchy of equal rights and obligations seems to be a reasonable strategy to bridge the gap between inclusion and exclusion.

Fourth, why should multiculturalism be linked with (employment) equity in the social and economic arena? Cultural diversity *per se* is not responsible for inequality, discrimination and racism and their recognition will by themselves not much change these barriers. But socio-economic inequality, unequal opportunities, and outright discrimination obstruct the expression of cultural choices for individuals as well as for groups. Such tension most likely will generate ethnic conflicts, unfair competition, ethnocentrism, and xenophobia which are a threat not only to multiculturalism but also to its liberal foundations. Therefore MC needs to be linked with policies that address equality in labour markets and in the workplace.

Fifth, how can lawmakers and the public ensure that MC and equity policies correspond to the public will and do not harm economic efficiency? A lesson from the Canadian experiment is their step-by-step approach to creating broad awareness in the public. Also the practical considerations of application of laws, efficiency in reaching its objectives, and economic (but not only) benefits of multicultural and equity policies need to be taken into account to make programmes work and gain public legitimacy. Recognition of collective rights of immigrants and minorities cannot succeed without the native-born majority's increased awareness of discrimination and respect for tolerance. It will only be possible to develop the synergistic effects of MC for all involved if a large majority support the universalist credo; otherwise 'liberalism is placed on the defensive as it asymmetrically opens itself to illiberal influences' (Tamir 1995: 171). In the Canadian case the major Canadian parties have exercised a strong commitment, crossing party lines, so far. But the rise of populist politics and concomitant instrumentalisation of the issues at hand for short-sighted political gain, media sensationalism, and partisan 'expert' judgements, have in the 1990s increased public polarisation weakening the multicultural and equity consensus in the Canadian polity. The lesson for legislators, administrations, and media is to constantly monitor programmes and policies, explain them to the public but accept that the flux of events may demand policy changes within the confines of law, public legitimacy, liberal values, and human rights.

Sixth, what are the necessary political conditions to establish multiculturalism? MC policies will be successful only if built on a broad coalition of major societal power groups and with sufficient public and elite support. In Canada policies coincided with the interest of a reform-minded government to find adequate answers to new societal challenges; political parties trying to catch the minority and immigrant vote; Anglo-Canadian regions counterbalancing demands of the Francophones; and minority groups demanding more funding, equal opportunities, and the retention of identity, language and heritage (Fleras 1993: 391ff). Though this well-intended policy could not avoid unexpected consequences that were at odds with the original vision, such as the promotion of ethnic mobilisation and the rise of ethno-politics, i.e. the encouragement of claims 'based on identity, grievance, and injustice' (Pal 1993: 259), the Canadian example indicates that – given political will and public consensus – diversity can be accommodated by legislation and state intervention if not perfectly then at least reasonably (see also Berry and Laponce 1994; and Fleras and Elliott 1992: 273ff). A gap between law, rhetoric, and intentions and the reality experienced by minorities may always remain but the problematic and more conflict-generating alternatives of full assimilation or segregation/separation can be avoided.

Canadian lessons for Europe

Why would the Canadian experience matter for the ethno-culturally more homogenous European nation-states with their stronger assimilation pressures?

A debate about the implementation of MC and equity policies is indeed more edifying for political entities that share characteristics with Canada, a self-declared 'nation of nationalities' (Horace Kallen) with multi-ethnic and multi-lingual roots, a lack of a unifying nationhood tradition, and a specific demographic composition (Joppke 1994: 57). In fact, the evolving European Union with its multiple nations, languages, religions, and ethno-cultural minorities, as well as its over 2,000-year old transnational pan-European traditions, has many attributes typical for pluri-cultural and multi-ethnic political formations. As in Canada, where MC policies reflect a pragmatic response to practical problems for reasons of national identity, political unity, and social harmony, as well as for the benefit of foreign policy, economic profit, and trade (Pal 1993), a supranational *European multicultural framework* could provide cohesion and structure. A European version of MC could also bridge the variety of concepts that exist on national levels, ranging from traditional assimilationist, integrationist, or folklorist approaches to more inclusive pluralist policies, as in the case of Sweden or the Netherlands (see Heckmann 1993; Penninx 1993; and Runblom 1994). The hesitant, often fragmentary or even contradictory national response of many European countries to challenges of increased diversity is a result of their self-understanding as non-immigrant ethnic nations,[28] lack of awareness of the benefits of multicultural policies, different political cultures, and citizenship regulations (see Castles and Miller 1993; Joppke 1994; Rex 1993). In contrast to Canada, where MC mainly originated as a multi-partisan coalition of policy-makers and minorities, most national approaches in Europe are still caught in the quandary of left–right party politics. Left-wing and liberal concepts of multiculturalism often remain pedagogic, idealistic, and removed from practical application on a national level (Radtke 1991). The European right promotes ethno-pluralism, claiming the existence of ethno-cultural identities as intrinsic and static collective or national traits based on the notion 'separate, but equal'. However, such conceptions are hostile to fusing cultures, groups and nations, and promote cultural apartheid (Leggewie 1993: 14).

The question remains how to overcome these deep national divisions and variations in responding to diversity? A supranational European version of multiculturalism and equity policies could build on characteristics and a groundwork that Canada shares with European democracies, i.e. liberal values, human rights legislation, and a post-war proliferation of the welfare state. In EU treaties and in most Western constitutions the rights on which pluralism is based are already established and guaranteed: the legal tradition of tolerance, freedom of expression, anti-discrimination, equal treatment of individuals, and legal process. In fact, most EU countries already have some experience with anti-discrimination and equality (if not preferential or compensatory) legislation for women, veterans, minorities, immigrant school children, and the disabled (Fase 1994; Zegers de Beijl 1991). Also, the comparatively well-developed European welfare provisions, with their redistributive and egalitarian intent, may contribute to equal incorporation of immigrant minorities. Additionally, equal rights for minorities are guaranteed through the signature of international or supranational conventions (ILO, UNO, EU Human Rights Convention, CSCE Charter etc) and bi- or multilateral treaties.

With the ongoing global proliferation of transnational economic, social, and political rights (Soysal 1994) and the simultaneous integration of a multitude of semi-sovereign nation-states under the roof of the European Union many industrialised European countries will most likely become more diverse regionally, ethnically, culturally, and religiously as a consequence of internal EU migration. This trend will be fostered through a demographic decline, reduced native-born labour force participation, and rising demands of immigrant minorities to be respected, to share equal rights, and to participate in the host society. Finally, the logic of developed welfare states to promote social equality, integration, and redistribution among all societal members, and continuing pressures of immigration and refugee movements from outside the union, will push the issues of accommodating diversity, non-discrimination, and equal rights from the national onto the supranational EU agenda. Therefore a European version of multiculturalism and employment equity could standardise and homogenise the current diversity of national approaches and also smooth national transformations within a European-wide framework of democratic universalist values, justice, freedom, human rights, and the rule of law. Officially accepting and constitutionally anchoring diversity and equality for all EU member-states could, as the Canadian experience indicates, be a first step toward achieving more cohesion, material equality, social justice, and mutual cultural respect between various minority and majority groups. A European multiculturalism could also give the EU a distinct supranational identity and help reduce the potential clash between traditional mono-culturalism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, and other particularistic movements and ideologies *and* the emerging new reality of a transcultural and transnational pan-European unity. Finally, adequately 'managing' its diversity as an asset would, in the long run, help Europe to compete successfully on the world markets and to represent its political and cultural interests with moral credibility. The first step would be to understand that the approach to diversity determines its outcomes and not diversity itself (see Adler 1983: 364).

Conclusion

The evolution of Canadian MC from a rather symbolic and folklorist concept concerned primarily with maintaining distinguished cultural features of minorities to a more comprehensive model of institutionalised collective representation based on a new understanding of citizenship and nationhood in combination with a policy of employment equity (concerned with equal representation, participation, and justice), constitutes a remarkable achievement in comparison with other Western democracies. Now the country perceives itself as the first multicultural nation within a bilingual framework that recognises both poly-ethnicity and multi-nationality (Kymlicka 1995: 22). Available data illustrate that official MC has contributed to an environment that neither requires full assimilation of immigrants and minorities nor has induced segregation or societal fragmentation, as some critics have feared. To many observers, Canada represents one of the most viable democratic multi-ethnic and multinational states that embraced the ideology and policy of unity in diversity or convergence through acceptance of divergence where individuals are expected 'to display primary affiliation as citizens of the state; [which] ... in no way precludes secondary identification with a preferred cultural heritage' (Fleras 1993: 386f).

The Canadian public has been engaged in a dialogue and the government has shown some flexibility in adapting pluralist policies to the nation's ever-changing conditions. Canada has officially embedded elements of ethnic, national, and cultural pluralism and equality policies in its constitution, law, politics, and institutions. The potential tension between collective and individual rights was bridged by combining official recognition of particularist minority interests, heritage, and identities in the private sphere with the promotion of formal individual equality in the public sector. Inequality in the workplace was later addressed through employment equity legislation (Kallen 1982: 60f). The demand for more group autonomy and self-determination was combined with the need for a common identification by declaring MC a symbolic keystone of Canada's national identity. The relative symmetry of power, resources, and institutional completeness among ethno-cultural units, their autonomy and distinctiveness has been accommodated with funds and other institutional support as long as these groups act within the liberal and democratic Canadian constitution, political system, and multicultural framework. At the same time, however, it was declared that ethnic identity was a voluntary matter for individuals. The issue of Canadian Francophones was fixed through official bilingualism, federalism, and attempted – but failed – constitutional amendments (e.g. Charlottetown Accord 1992). Quebecois separatism has not been pacified through this policy. Similarly the issue of the aboriginal 'first nations' was addressed by constitutional and territorial concessions in the 1990s but also has not been solved with the help of the Canadian brand of multiculturalism.

Employment equity policies have undoubtedly offered minority groups and individuals more choices to succeed by promoting tolerance as a standard of interaction, removing barriers of institutional participation, granting legal protection, and easing access to benefits of citizenship, education, employment, and welfare. But equity policies have been insufficient so far to correct socioeconomic inequalities inherent to capitalist market economies or long standing patterns of economic domination by Anglo-Europeans.

Europe may benefit from careful consideration of Canada's experiences and solutions: how to institutionalise diversity without questioning societal unity; how to effectively maintain, monitor, and enforce MC and employment equity; how to define a community's symbols, values, and ethos with changing demographics and global interdependence; and how to manage legitimate group interests with rights of fair procedure in areas such as language, education, and religion (see also Pask 1994: 126ff, 132, 136ff). Developing a supranational European policy that combines recognition of diversity and respect for 'a diversity of approaches to diversity' (Kymlicka 1995: 190) could be a solution to accommodate the needs of the emerging multinational and multicultural European federation. Then Canada as well as Europe might become the vanguards of unique transformations of nation-states into post-national units within a global covenant of cosmopolitan communities willing to fuse cultures and horizons on the basis of mutual respect, recognition, and tolerance.

Acknowledgement

Notes

1 Ethnicity refers to 'an involuntary group of people who share [or practice] the same [symbolic or material] culture or to descendants of such people who identify themselves and/or are identified by others as belonging to the same involuntary group' (Isajiw 1985: 116).

2 Culture describes the meaningful way of life of a group of people, including the configuration of all the more or less stereotyped patterns of learned behaviour that are handed down from one generation to the next through the means of language and imitation (Adler 1983). The term used here is concerned with ethnicity and 'race'-based minority cultures distinct from mainstream or dominant cultures 'across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational, and economic life, encompassing both public and private spheres' (Kymlicka 1995: 76).

3 Different sorts of collective minority rights can be distinguished: (a) self-government rights to national minorities; (b) legal, social, cultural and financial protection rights in poly-ethnic states; and (c) special representation rights of national and ethnic groups in state institutions. Rights can be further separated as either promoting equality, historical claims, or pluralism (Kymlicka 1995: 6ff).

4 Pluralism in contrast to societal heterogeneity suggests the existence of multiple ethno-cultural or 'racial' groups which maintain relatively distinct and independent (but not separate) institutions and traditions (language, occupations, political associations, kinship patterns, religious beliefs) within a larger society governed by one administration. Generally these societies are characterised by cultural diversity and social cleavages manifest in ascriptive hierarchies based on ethnicity, 'race', or tribe (Simpson 1995: 459, 462).

5 For the use of MC in the context of the political correctness debate, see Kurthen and Losey 1995.

6 For details of policy evolution, see Pal 1993.

7 Canadians of Asian origin number 5.5 per cent according to the 1991 census and are the fastest growing minority group. More than 80 per cent are foreign-born (Cardozo 1994a: 48).

8 Before the rise of the concept of MC the 'melting pot' ideology of biologically fusing and culturally blending white European immigrant groups into 'Anglo-American ethnicity' was believed to be a more dynamic and progressive idea in comparison with the assimilationist European concept of ethnic nationalism. But both models, the Anglo-American and the Canadian Anglo-conformist, nevertheless revealed colonialist arrogance and racism, built as they were on the notion of cultural superiority and domination of one group, the so-called WASP's (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants), and English as the single or dominant language.

9 For a definition of 'incorporation', see Paquet (1994: 69), and more comprehensively, Bader (1996).

10 The Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism (renamed in 1983 the Canadian Ethnocultural Council) had advisory, research, and monitoring responsibilities but collapsed in 1986 and was replaced by a small council of about 40 members better chosen, organised and more manageable. However, the successor Canadian Multiculturalism Council no longer meets and is effectively dead.

11 The Francophones' image of a threat from 'monolithic' English-speaking Canada, however, is resented in the Anglo-Canadian camp. The western and Atlantic regions, for example, view themselves as much different from, say Ontario and the Prairie-provinces. Perhaps the strongest case is Newfoundland, which was separate from Canada until 1947 and retains a very strong and distinct culture from other English-speaking regions in North America.

12 For the Australian case, see Castles (1994: 9).

13 For more details about legal aspects, see Eyraud *et al.* 1993; Gunderson 1985; Jain 1990; and Tarnopolsky 1993.

14 Under voluntary programmes, employers are only asked to sign a certificate of commitment and allow access to reports if reviewed. Under a mandatory programme, employers would have to set equity goals and timetables, consult and report their progress annually, and allow to be periodically reviewed and held responsible in case of failure.

15 75 per cent of all 'visible' minorities covered by equity policies are immigrants, of which almost half arrived within the past decade (*Migration News*, December 1995).

16 For a critical assessment of recent equity measures, see Boyd (1995).

17 According to Cardozo (1994a: 48) of 200 top CEO's in the country, less than 2 per cent were Canadian racial minorities. A similar low representation was found among unions, federal and provincial cabinet ministers, media editorial boards, mayors, regional chairs, police, and fire department chiefs in major cities.

18 A Gallup poll conducted 3–14 December 1993, revealed that 74 per cent of Canadians felt that government positions should be filled based on merit alone, rather than ethno-cultural background, skin-colour, or gender through an equity programme. Canadian support for equity employment grows as one moves from west to east. Whereas among supporters, programmes for women and minority applicants were undisputed, two out of three approving respondents defended some sort of quota system.

19 See, for example, Roy (1995: 206f), or a report on equity policies for disabled people based on the 1991 Health and Activity Limitation Survey (Shain 1995), studies by Palmer (1991) for the Economic Council of Canada, and a poll by Berry and Kalin (Berry and Kalin 1995) about racist and xenophobic attitudes of Canadians.

20 For example, the wearing of turbans in the Royal Mounted Police or at veteran ceremonies, recognition of non-Christian holidays and separate schools, police reactions to ethnic crime, ethnic tensions in neighbourhoods and schools, etc (see Roy 1995: 207f).

21 For other reviews, see Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 1992; Fleras and Elliott 1992; and Wilson 1993: 656ff.

22 For a good overview of similar arguments from the American perspective, see Schlesinger (1993).

23 Poll support for the statement that 'too many immigrants [are] coming to Canada' grew from 30 per cent in 1988 to 43 per cent in 1989 (Paquet 1994: 66, citing Palmer 1991). In a 1993 Decima poll, 41 per cent of 1,200 Canadians surveyed stated that Canada's immigration policy allows 'too many people of different races and cultures' to come in. Surprisingly, 67 per cent of Toronto respondents (including 38 per cent belonging to minority groups themselves) supported this statement. 72 per cent of all respondents expected that minorities should adapt to the 'Canadian' value system rather than maintain their differences (similarly Fleras and Elliott 1992: 114f).

24 This includes larger corporations, where the view prevails that MC is demographically useful and good for business because it strengthens competitiveness, attracts immigrants with needed 'human capital', and gives Canada access to immigrants' world-wide economic resources and trade links (see, for example, Cleghorn 1993).

25 For further arguments and facts, see Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 1992: 370; Fleras and Elliott 1992: 111ff; Kurthen 1991; Reid 1991; and Reitz and Breton 1994.

26 For an elaboration, see McLellan and Richmond 1994: 675 and Pask 1994: 124.

27 Recent studies (see Fix and Passel 1994 for the USA) show that the alleged (ab)use of welfare entitlements is wildly exaggerated. In the long run most immigrants will return the 'welfare investment' if integrated into the host society's economy.

28 For Germany, see Kurthen 1995.

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